

CONFIDENTIAL ROME 001461

SIPDIS

PAGE 02 ROME 01461 211803Z  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY ZAGREB IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001461

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/2012  
TAGS: PARM PREL IT CWC  
SUBJECT: OPCW ITALIANS CONCERNED ABOUT LINKAGE TO  
CONTRIBUTION PAYMENTS

REF: A. A) STATE 53938

1B. B) STATE 51363

CLASSIFIED BY: POLMIN COUNSELOR TOM COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS 1.5(B), (D)

11. (C) ITALY DOUBTS THE REMOVAL OF DG BUSTANI WILL BE SETTLED BY THE OPCW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND EXPECTS IT WILL HAVE TO BE RESOLVED AT THE STATES PARTIES MEETING THIS FALL, ACCORDING TO MFA ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT OFFICE DIRECTOR ALESSANDRO CEVESE. CEVESE MET WITH POL-MIL OFFICER JUST AFTER TALKING WITH ITALY'S OPCW REPRESENTATIVE ON MARCH 21. ITALY CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE NO CONFIDENCE MOTION, CEVESE SAID, BUT THE PROCESS HAS BEEN VERY DIVISIVE FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COULD END UP BEING COSTLY AS WELL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 01461 211803Z

12. (C) CEVESE MENTIONED ONE THEORY CURRENTLY CIRCULATING THAT THE U.S. EFFORT TO REMOVE BUSTANI IS AN ATTEMPT TO WEAKEN THE OPCW IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE AUSTRALIA GROUP. WHILE ITALY RECOGNIZES THAT BUSTANI'S REMOVAL IS SOUGHT AS A MEANS OF RESTORING THE OPCW'S VIABILITY, SOME COUNTRIES SUSPECT THE U.S. HAS OTHER MOTIVES, CEVESE COMMENTED. RUMOURS THAT THE U.S. MIGHT NOT PAY ITS CONTRIBUTION OR MIGHT PRESSURE THE ORGANIZATION TO CEASE OPERATIONS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IF BUSTANI IS NOT REMOVED UNDERMINE U.S. STATEMENTS THAT ITS OBJECTIVE IS TO STRENGTHEN THE OPCW, HE SAID. THE GOI WOULD BE VERY CONCERNED IF THE U.S. IS CONSIDERING EITHER OF THESE OPTIONS, ACCORDING TO CEVESE. SUCH ACTIONS WOULD FURTHER DELAY DECISIONS ON RESOLVING THE FINANCIAL CRISIS FACING THE ORGANIZATION. ITALY AGREES WITH THE U.S. THAT BUSTANI'S RESIGNATION IS NECESSARY, CEVESE SAID, BUT LINKING HIS REMOVAL TO CONTRIBUTIONS PAYMENTS OR THE OPCW OPERATION WOULD BE A SERIOUS MISTAKE. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT ITALY INTENDS TO PAY ITS CONTRIBUTION WHETHER OR NOT BUSTANI IS REMOVED. POL-MIL OFFICER, DRAWING FROM REFS A, B AND OTHERS, EMPHASIZED THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE CWC AND THE OPCW, AND STRESSED THAT STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION IS THE ONLY MOTIVE BEHIND U.S. ACTIONS.

13. (C) COMMENT. THE GOI SUPPORTS A NO CONFIDENCE MOTION AGAINST DG BUSTANI, IN PART BECAUSE IT AGREES BUSTANI HAS FAILED TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE DONE TO THE ORGANIZATION BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT RECOGNIZES THAT BUSTANI HAS LOST THE CONFIDENCE OF THE U.S. THAT SAID, THE ITALIANS WOULD HAVE PREFERRED BROADER CONSULTATIONS WITH OPCW MEMBERS BEFORE THE U.S. MOUNTED THE EFFORT TO REMOVE BUSTANI. THE GOI'S PARAMOUNT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ROME 01461 211803Z  
CONCERN CONTINUES TO BE MINIMIZING THE HARM TO THE OPCW'S INTEGRITY AND RESTORING ITS VIABILITY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.  
END COMMENT.  
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